



**University of  
Zurich**<sup>UZH</sup>

**Zurich Open Repository and  
Archive**

University of Zurich  
Main Library  
Strickhofstrasse 39  
CH-8057 Zurich  
[www.zora.uzh.ch](http://www.zora.uzh.ch)

---

Year: 2017

---

## **The Song of Songs as a Hebrew “counterweight” to Hellenistic drama**

Hopf, Matthias Rüdiger

**Abstract:** In recent exegesis, the Song of Songs has commonly been held not to be dramatic at all. This view stands in line with the notion that there is no drama in the Hebrew Bible. However, the concept of “drama” in literary and performance studies has evolved considerably in the past decades. As a consequence, the key question must be asked again: How can we identify a text as dramatic or oriented towards performance? To answer this, a threefold criteriology taken from contemporary literary studies is presented: Lexis, Opsis and Plot. These useful and rather universal criteria lead to a differentiated look at the “performance potential” of the book – and to the conclusion that the Song basically matches this criteriology. Furthermore, various clues are given that the book was indeed performed, at least from the Hellenistic period onward, to which the final redaction should be dated. As the collection of the biblical Writings needs to be understood against the background of a struggle with the predominant Alexandrian culture, the Song might represent a piece of Jewish dramatic or performance literature, or in other words, a Hebrew “counterweight” to Hellenistic drama in the Jewish literary canon of the Writings.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.13109/jaju.2017.8.2.208>

Posted at the Zurich Open Repository and Archive, University of Zurich

ZORA URL: <https://doi.org/10.5167/uzh-159544>

Journal Article

Accepted Version

Originally published at:

Hopf, Matthias Rüdiger (2017). The Song of Songs as a Hebrew “counterweight” to Hellenistic drama. *Journal of Ancient Judaism*, 8(2):208-221.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.13109/jaju.2017.8.2.208>

# The Song of Songs as a Hebrew “Counterweight” to Hellenistic Drama

## 1 Introduction

“Neither biblical nor Talmudic literature contains anything which can be described as ‘theater’ or ‘drama’ in the modern sense of these terms.”<sup>1</sup> Thus the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* informs us in its entry on theater—and this is completely in line with the mainstream view on the Hebrew Bible in general, as well as the Song of Songs in particular.<sup>2</sup> We do not find too many recent commentaries on the Song that advocate the so-called drama theory. The last major commentators who did so (and were acknowledged for that) were probably Delitzsch, Ewald and Ginsburg.<sup>3</sup> Even so, Stefan Fischer only recently called for a new effort to analyse the Song by using a performance centered methodology.<sup>4</sup>

In line with the latter, I will argue that the Song of Songs actually needs to be described as a dramatic text—especially in its modern sense. This classification as a dramatic or rather a performance text might even help to understand and reevaluate the process of canonization of this book. The Song of Songs might actually have been included in the biblical canon as it was viewed as a Hebrew “counterweight” to Hellenistic drama.<sup>5</sup>

Yet, as the mainstream still maintains that there is no Hebrew drama, everything seems to hinge on the key question:

## 2 What Is A “Drama”?

At this point, a remark on the term “drama” is needed: In fact, it seems advisable to be very careful in the use of this expression, when speaking about the Song of Songs, as well as the Hebrew Bible in general. The reason for this is that “drama” is very easily misunderstood. Many

---

<sup>1</sup> Lewis Soden, “Theater: Origins, Post-Biblical Period,” *EJ* 15:1049.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. e. g. the strict verdict by Wilhelm Rudolph, *Das Buch Ruth—Das Hobe Lied—Die Klagelieder*, KAT 17,1/3 (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1970), 97. Similar assessments in newer publications could be added.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Franz Delitzsch, *Das Hohelied* (Leipzig: Dörffling und Franke, 1851; repr., Charleston: Nabu Press, 2010); Georg H. A. Ewald, *Das Hohelied Salomos* (Göttingen: Deuerlich, 1826; repr., Whitefish: Kessinger Publishing, 2011); Christian D. Ginsburg, *The Song of Songs: Translated from the Original Hebrew, with a Commentary, Historical and Critical* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans, and Roberts, 1857; repr., Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2009).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Stefan Fischer, *Das Hohelied Salomos zwischen Poesie und Erzählung: Erzähltextanalyse eines poetischen Textes*, FAT 72 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), VII and 240.

<sup>5</sup> It would be more precise to speak of “tragedy” and “comedy”. Yet, in line with the modern use of “drama” as the umbrella term for both, I will simply use this term. Cf. also Bernhard Zimmermann, “Drama,” *DNP* 3:812–813.

people will associate with it the classical drama tradition like the plays of Shakespeare and others.<sup>6</sup> It seems to me that most opposition in Hebrew Bible exegesis to the “drama theory” for the Song derives from those preconceived and more or less pretheoretical notions about “drama”. Yet, not even ancient Greek tragedies and comedies would completely match with that view of theater. An assumed ancient Jewish performance tradition, which probably had—at least in parts—a tendency to distance itself from Hellenistic concepts, should fit even less into that picture. The Song of Songs is most definitely not comparable to theater in a Shakespearean tradition, even though, as is to be shown in this contribution, it was likely performed in public in a way that bears similarities to ancient Hellenistic traditions of comedy and tragedy. So in order to avoid any misconception, I am inclined to add the term “performance” as a corrective for “drama”, as it is more neutral and seems to be applicable to a wider range of forms of presentation<sup>7</sup> that we need to reckon with when dealing with the Song of Songs. Furthermore, the surrogate “performance” might even come very close to the original sense of the Greek word “drama”. The verb δράν simply means “to perform”, after all.

In spite of this terminological problem we still need a criteriology for determining what a drama or performance text is. There are several ways to answer this question. The first one would be to look to Aristotle as his work *Περὶ Ποιητικῆς* represents one of the earliest theories of drama.<sup>8</sup> It might even be that his theories influenced the view on drama in Hellenistic times at least in a subliminal and indirect way.<sup>9</sup> However, we need to consider that early Judaism might have fashioned its performance tradition in a different way.

---

<sup>6</sup> This notion seems to influence e. g. (Rudolph, *Lied*, 97, where he states that a drama needs to have a development in its plot and—most of all—a culmination point and goal. Interestingly though, several commentaries opposing the drama theory arrange the text of the Song according to dramatic conventions, cf. e. g. Roland E. Murphy, *The Song of Songs: A Commentary on the Book of Canticles or The Song of Songs*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), 130; J. C. Exum, *Song of Songs: A Commentary*, OTL (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005), 97–98 or Gianni Barbiero, *Song of Songs: A Close Reading*, VTSup 144 (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2011), 47–50.

<sup>7</sup> With respect to the term “performance” cf. Manfred Pfister, “Performance/Performativität,” in *Metzler Lexikon Literatur- und Kulturtheorie: Ansätze—Personen—Grundbegriffe*, 4th ed., ed. Ansgar Nünning (Stuttgart, Weimar: J.B. Metzler, 2008), 562–564, see esp. 562–63. Furthermore, it should be noted that the terms “performance” and “performative” are used according to the definition of the “weak concept of performativity” according to Sibylle Krämer and Marco Stahlhut, “Das ‘Performative’ als Thema der Sprach- und Kulturphilosophie,” *Paragana* 10,1.1 (2001): 35–64, see esp. 55–56, and Erika Fischer-Lichte, *Performativität: Eine Einführung*, 2nd ed., Edition Kulturwissenschaft 10 (Bielefeld: transcript, 2012), 44.

<sup>8</sup> According to Aristoteles, Poet. 1449b–1450b, a Hellenistic drama comprises six elements: *μῦθος* (message, plot), *ἥθη* (characters), *λέξις* (speech), *διάνοια* (thought, intention), *ὄψις* (imagery, scenic quality) and *μελοποιία* (musical composition).<sup>8</sup> Yet, there are two problems with these six criteria: First, the various elements overlap in certain parts, e. g. *μῦθος* and *διάνοια*. Second, the criteria are heavily dependant on the Hellenistic drama tradition, e. g. the *μελοποιία*.

<sup>9</sup> Of course, I am aware that the Poetics as one Aristotle’s *acroamatic* writings was not commonly used in Hellenistic times, at least much less than his *exoteric* writings, cf. Dorothea Frede, “Aristoteles: 6. Sohn des Nikomachos, aus

This leads to a second, modern definition developed by Bernhard Asmuth, a leading German literary scholar. Even though drawing upon Aristotle's criteriology, he modifies it heavily so that he, in effect, creates a distinctive set of criteria, which is dependant on Aristotle mainly in the names for the three basic characteristics: the Lexis, the Opsi and the Plot.<sup>10</sup>

- By Lexis Asmuth means that a text is composed primarily of direct speech, which can be attributed to certain identifiable characters. This is called the "main text". Along with it comes the so-called "marginal text", i. e. stage directions, identification of the speakers, the title etc. This marginal text can occur, but is not prerequisite.<sup>11</sup>
- The second criterion is the Opsi. This means that the text evokes elements of imagery like components of the scenery or stage acting. Opsi elements can be indicated by the marginal text (e. g. "Thunder. Enter the three witches"), but also by the main text, i. e. hidden in the direct speech.<sup>12</sup>
- The third criterion Plot, is usually associated with the notion of a story that has a coherent, logical line of action and a unity of time and space. That, however, is not necessarily required according to modern drama theory (just think of the modern Theater of the Absurd). Instead, the term "plot" can simply be applied to a basic principle of composition, a fundamental and overarching structure.<sup>13</sup>

These three basic elements are needed to form a dramatic or performance text in the sense of some kind of universal genre.<sup>14</sup> This modern definition of "drama" is, thus, a useful tool to evalu-

---

Stageira," *DNP* 1:1136–37. Still it seems quite plausible that Aristotle's considerations might have influenced later conventions for drama literature.

<sup>10</sup> Asmuth's theories have been applied to biblical texts before by Stefan A. Nitsche, *Jesaja 24–27: ein dramatischer Text: Die Frage nach den Genres prophetischer Literatur des Alten Testaments und die Textgraphik der großen Jesajarolle aus Qumran*, BWANT 166 (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2006), 42–44, and Helmut Utzschneider, *Michas Reise in die Zeit: Studien zum Drama als Genre der prophetischen Literatur des Alten Testaments*, SBS 180 (Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1999), 16–17.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Bernhard Asmuth, *Einführung in die Dramenanalyse*, 5th ed., Sammlung Metzler 188 (Stuttgart: J. B. Metzler, 1997), 51–53.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Nitsche, *Jesaja*, 44–45. Similarly, David Rhoads, "Performance Criticism: An Emerging Methodology in Second Testament Studies—Part I," *BTB* 36 (2006): 118–33, esp. 120, states: "I am no longer seeing words on a page or anticipating sounds in my head. Rather, I imagine the scenes in my mind and I tell/show what I 'see/hear' to a living audience before me". This phenomenon is called "Wortkulisse" (verbal scenery), cf. Asmuth, *Einführung*, 51–52; likewise Manfred Pfister, *Das Drama: Theorie und Analyse*, 11th ed., UTB 580 (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 2001), 351–52.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Heinz Antor, "Plot," in *Metzler Lexikon Literatur- und Kulturtheorie: Ansätze—Personen—Grundbegriffe*, ed. Ansgar Nünning (Stuttgart, Weimar: J. B. Metzler, 2008), 575–76, see esp. 575; Pfister, *Drama*, 169; as well as Nitsche, *Jesaja*, 45–46; or in a broader sense also Richard Schechner, *Performance Studies: An Introduction*, 2nd ed. (New York, London: Routledge, 2006), 121.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Helmut Utzschneider, "Ist das Drama eine universale Gattung?: Erwägungen zu 'dramatischen' Texten in der alttestamentlichen Prophetie, der attischen Tragödie und im ägyptischen Kultspiel," in *Gottes Vorstellung: Untersuchungen zur literarischen Ästhetik und Theologie des Alten Testaments*, ed. Helmut Utzschneider, BWANT 175 (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2007), 269–98, see esp. 296–98.

ate texts without regard to the cultural setting they are taken from. Accordingly, the criteria should apply to modern texts as well as ancient ones. Still, we have to bear in mind one more thing: With regard to imagery or story, i. e. with regard to Opsis and Plot, there is basically no difference in genre between narrative and dramatic texts, as the former feature scenery-descriptions and a story-line as well. As a consequence, the most fundamental criterion for a dramatic text would be that the text is presented in direct discourse throughout, without any mediating narrator. This elementary definition was established by Manfred Pfister, a German scholar of English literature.<sup>15</sup> According to this definition, even verbatim protocols or liturgies would be “dramatic”, to give only two examples.<sup>16</sup> As a matter of fact, they could very well be enacted, be performed. So, the lexis is what defines a dramatic, or to be more precise, a performance text, one that can be performed.

Still, in order to speak of a dramatic performance in a narrower sense (and not of dramatic or performance *texts*), we should still cling to the criteria Opsis and Plot. For, the Opsis creates the optical world of a dramatic performance and the Plot makes perceivable the text’s unity and coherence. But it might be that a text features elements of Opsis or Plot only to a lesser degree. For example, there might be only some optical hints and only a somewhat less developed coherence. As a consequence, I have introduced the term “performance potential”, in order to judge the range between “completely dramatic” on the one hand and “Lexis only” on the other.<sup>17</sup>

### 3 The Song of Songs—dramatic!

The named three criteria, Lexis, Opsis and Plot, should help us to determine the Performance Potential of the Song of Songs, i. e. how “dramatic” it actually is.<sup>18</sup>

#### 3.1 *The Lexis in the Song*<sup>19</sup>

The first and fundamental criterion of a dramatic text, the Lexis, is obviously met by the Song of Songs: Except for the title, the whole text is presented as direct discourse out of the mouth of

---

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Pfister, *Drama*, 20–22.

<sup>16</sup> This notion is also found in Richard Schechner, *Performance Theory*, 2nd ed., Routledge classics (London, New York: Routledge, 2003), 170–210ff.; and for the Song in particular see Marvin H. Pope, *Song of Songs: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AncB 7,C (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1977), 35.

<sup>17</sup> This concept is in some ways similar to the notion of “strukturelle Performanz” (structural performance or performativity) by Fischer-Lichte, *Performativität*, 138–45, even though the latter remains more on the textual level and does not really take the possible performance itself into account.

<sup>18</sup> For greater detail on the methodology cf. Matthias Hopf, *Liebesszenen: Eine literaturwissenschaftliche Studie zum Hohelied als einem dramatisch-performativen Text*, ATANT 108 (Zurich: TVZ Theologischer Verlag, 2016), 41–60.

<sup>19</sup> For greater detail cf. the summary in Hopf, *Liebesszenen*, 293–310.

one of the three entities—the woman, the man and the Daughters of Jerusalem.<sup>20</sup> At some points it might not be completely clear, to whom an utterance must be attributed. Still, we can identify the speaker in most cases and usually even the addressed from the hints in the text. Actually, a reconstruction like this is quite typical for ancient drama manuscripts, as the speakers were usually not indicated by any marginal text in ancient manuscripts.<sup>21</sup>

Based on the reconstruction of speakers and addressees it can be determined, in turn, who is present in any given situation. This, eventually, leads to a structuring of the Song in scenes. With these attributions of speech to the characters, different kinds of communication emerge: predominantly dialogues and in some cases also monologues.<sup>22</sup> A fine example for such dialogic structures would be Song 1:7–9, where all three voices speak up:

*She:*           <sup>7</sup> Tell me please—you, whom my soul loves: Where do you pasture? Where do you lie at midday—lest I  
                    be like one, who wanders by the herds of your companions.  
*Daughters:* <sup>8</sup> If you do not know yourself, O most beautiful among women, go out yourself on the tracks of the  
                    sheep and pasture your kids at the dwelling places of the shepherds.  
*He:*           <sup>9</sup> To a mare among the Pharaoh's chariots have I likened you, my friend.

In the beginning of this discourse, the woman addresses the man longingly. Then she is interrupted by the group of women,<sup>23</sup> who tease her with their remark. But the man cuts the Daughter off with a rather cryptic statement, seemingly not related to the prior remark. Yet the meaning of this comment is to take side with the woman, as the verse most likely conveys the following: Your presence is so confusing to me just like a mare in heat is among war stallions.<sup>24</sup> Thus, in that short passage a verbal exchange of longing, teasing and taking sides unfolds. Similar situations predominate in most of the book. And as consequence, I would argue for a dialogic coherence where other scholars usually perceive a caesura—here and elsewhere in the Song.

Yet in some instances, a striking phenomenon occurs: The unmediated character of the dramatic text seems to be disrupted by short passages of narration, in which episodes not located “on stage” are recounted. This might, at first glance, contradict to the dramatic nature of the text,

<sup>20</sup> Some have argued that passages like 8:6–7 are to be attributed to an external voice (cf. e. g. Fischer, *Hobelied*, 170–71; Yair Zakovitch, *Das Hobelied*, HThKAT (Freiburg im Breisgau, Basel, Vienna: Herder, 2004), 271. In contrast, Hopf, *Liebesszenen*, 271, has argued that there is no textual indication whatsoever for a change of speaker. And as there is no other instance in the Song, where a narrator speaks up, it does not seem plausible to assume in 8:6–8 the voice of a narrator all of a sudden.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Schechner, *Theory*, 78; similarly Nitsche, *Jesaja*, 53–55.

<sup>22</sup> Still, we never find genuine soliloquies, as there are always at least two characters on stage.

<sup>23</sup> We can conceive that the group of women is speaking by the fact, that they are the only ones in the Song to call the woman the “most beautiful among women”, cf. Hopf, *Liebesszenen*, 103.

<sup>24</sup> For this quite common interpretation see among others: Pope, *Song*, 338–39; Othmar Keel, *Das Hobelied*, 2nd ed., ZBK.AT 18 (Zurich: TVZ Theologischer Verlag, 1992), 61–62; Tremper Longman, III., *Song of Songs*, NICOT (Grand Rapids, Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2001), 103; Zakovitch, *Hobelied*, 127–28; Exum, *Song*, 108–09.

as it opposes the fundamental criterion of the Lexis by Pfister. Yet, in any given case the narratives are presented in direct speech and the characters *act* as narrators and relate a story on stage.<sup>25</sup> In fact, even one of the passages that is usually called one of the most dramatic parts, must be counted among those instances: The famous night scene of 5:2–8<sup>26</sup> might recount a dramatic story—but it does this in a narrative mode of presentation. The exchange between the woman and the man, the woman’s frantic search in the streets—all those do not take place “on stage”, they are told by the woman as a story to the Daughters. This demonstrates the need for a precise use of the term “drama” in exegetical literature.

So in effect, the criterion of the Lexis is indeed met, as the Song features a main text of continuous direct discourse.

### 3.2 *The Opsis in the Song*<sup>27</sup>

Elements of an Opsis can also be found in the Song of Songs. Yet here, we must pay even closer attention to the distinction between narratives and genuine on-stage-dialogue. Several times the speeches create truly magnificent pictures of a scene or some kind of action. Having a closer look, however, it is to be discerned that this imagery does not describe what is on stage, but some other place or even time. A fine example would be Song 1:7–8 again: The pastoral scene painted by those two verses is not to be understood as the scenery, in which the characters are situated. It is rather another place and time, at which the characters “look” verbally—it is an “off-stage-scenery”, so to speak. This issue is made even more complex by the recurring metaphors, which do not convey any real Opsis at all. The mentioned metaphor about the mare and the chariots in 1:9 illustrates this problem. In fact, many hints and descriptions of optical elements in the Song have to be interpreted either as off-stage-scenery or as metaphors, and we need to be very precise in determining the nature of any given element.

In spite of all this, there are still many instances of a real Opsis, e. g. in Song 1:6, the woman speaks of herself and clearly gives a description of her outward appearance:

*She.*     <sup>6</sup> Do not stare at me, as I am black, as the sun has gazed on me.

---

<sup>25</sup> This phenomenon is a stylistic device called “Episierung” in modern drama theory (i. e. a tendency to epic theater). Cf. Pfister, *Drama*, 103–22.

<sup>26</sup> A dramatic understanding is proposed, among others, by Pope, *Song*, 510; Michael V. Fox, *The Song of Songs and the Ancient Egyptian Love Songs* (Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 142; or recently Zakovitch, *Hobbelied*, 211–12.

<sup>27</sup> For greater detail cf. the summary in Hopf, *Liebeszenen*, 311–29.

Other examples would be the famous description songs. But also on-stage-action is put into words. For example in 8:5, the Daughters comment on the entrance of the woman and the man, which is described by these words:

*Daughters:* <sup>5</sup> Who is this coming up from the wilderness, leaning on her lover?

Yet, more often than on-stage-action the scenery is described in various instances. In Song 1:17 e. g. the woman and the man reveal where they are: in the refuge of Mother Nature itself.

*She and He:*<sup>17</sup> The beams of our house are cedars, our rafters are cypresses.

Here, and elsewhere in the Song, a verbal scenery is given.<sup>28</sup> If those references have been supported in possible historical performances by some kind of stage decorations or the like, cannot be decided. Still, I tend to doubt it, as half of the scenes, quite strikingly, are not really to be located at all. The texts do not give any hints and the characters seem to be situated in an “empty room”, so to speak. In my opinion, this vagueness of the locations helps to make the scenes and the whole Song “portable”: The scenes can be enacted under many circumstances and in almost any location, as they take their setting with them in the characters’ words.

In any case, the Song of Songs fulfils the second criterion—although in its own fashion.

### **3.3 The Plot in the Song<sup>29</sup>**

The third and last criterion touches upon a highly discussed question: Is there an overall design to be seen in the Song of Songs? Without going into details of this discussion, I might go so far as to say that there is a growing tendency to affirm this question.<sup>30</sup> Of course, there is admittedly no coherent story unfolding all over the book from scene to scene—something which has been put forward many times against a dramatic approach to the Song. Still, the problem with this argument is the presupposition that a story is needed for coherence. But as I pointed out earlier, a plot does not necessarily tell a story. Instead, the term can be applied to a basic principle of composition, as well. And the main criterion is: What does the analysis of the text tell?

I would argue that we can actually make out altogether 10 separate scenes, based on the structuring of the Lexis. Three of them need to be subdivided because of a change in the presence of characters on-stage. As a consequence I would structure the Song as follows:

Scene 1—Song 1:2–4a “Prelude à deux”

---

<sup>28</sup> In German, this is a coined technical term: “Wortkulisse”, cf. Asmuth, *Einführung*, 51–52.

<sup>29</sup> For greater detail cf. the summary in Hopf, *Liebeszenen*, 330–52.

<sup>30</sup> See the summary in Fischer, *Hobelied*, 10–11. More dubious remarks are made by Assis, Eliyahu. *Flashes of Fire: A Literary Analysis of the Song of Songs*. LHBOTS 503 (New York: T & T Clark, 2009), 11–12



- Scene 2—Song 1 :4b–11 “The Woman encounters her female adversaries in the rooms of her ›kingly‹ friend”  
 Scene 3—Song 1:12–2:3a “Togetherness in the ‘Green House’”  
 Scene 4A—Song 2:3b–7 “The Woman tells of her loveplay with the Man”  
 Scene 4B—Song 2:8–17 “The Man courts the Woman”  
 Scene 5—Song 3:1–5 “The Woman relates a dream”  
 Scene 6A—Song 3:6–11 “The Woman describes ‘King Solomon’”  
 Scene 6B—Song 4:1–5:1 “The Man courts the Woman again—now in seclusion”  
 Scene 7A—Song 5:2–6:3 “The Woman tells of a nightly episode and romanticizes about the Man”  
 Scene 7B—Song 6:4–7:13 “The Man exalts the Woman above all, is enchanted by her and enchants her himself”  
 Scene 8—Song 7:14–8:2 “An intimate scene in the countryside...”  
 Scene 9—Song 8:3–4 “...and what happens thereafter”  
 Scene 10—Song 8:5–14 “The seal on the lovers’ love”

Each of these scenes features a unity of time and space, a phenomenon which in itself already creates an overarching temporal and spatial structure. In the scenes, there is a limited set of characters, namely the woman, the man and the Daughters,<sup>31</sup> whose character is portrayed quite coherently throughout the book. Sometimes, it is argued that the depiction of the woman and especially the man contradicts itself, e. g. the man being addressed as a nobleman and as a shepherd. But this is to be seen as different travesties the man (or the woman) takes on. So, the characters only “disguise” themselves, not really *being* a king or queen, a shepherd or a girl from the countryside. With this understood, there do not remain any conflicting aspects between the different passages and we can see all the single characters in the book as one of the two lovers.<sup>32</sup>

With regard to the group of women, we might be tempted to call them something close to a Hellenistic choir. Yet, this group serves more as a separate character, a figure of its own with its own agenda, even though they do take up a commentary function.<sup>33</sup>

This coherent character-depiction, in any case, is the key to understanding the plot: The development in the character portrayal creates an overarching structure in the Song of Songs.<sup>34</sup> This can best be demonstrated in the characterization of the woman: In the beginning, she is not self-confident at all. On several occasions, it can be observed how anxious she is about her beloved.

<sup>31</sup> Other possible characters like some men’s group (e. g. the friends of the man or guards) are only hinted at in a referential mode of presentation. They do not take the stage themselves, as Hopf, *Liebeszenen*, 351–52, has shown.

<sup>32</sup> This concept of travesties has been proposed among others by Gillis Gerleman, *Ruth. Das Hohelied*, BKAT 18 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1965), 60–62; Hans-Peter Müller, Otto Kaiser, and James A. Loader, *Das Hohelied / Klagelieder / Das Buch Ester*, 4th ed., ATD 16/2 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992), 5; Hans-Peter Müller, “Travestien und geistige Landschaften: Zum Hintergrund einiger Motive bei Kohelet und im Hohelied,” *ZAW* 109 (1997): 557–74, see esp. 561–62; Walter Bühlmann, *Das Hohelied*, NSK.AT 15 (Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1997), 21 and elsewhere; Murphy, *Song*, 47; Hopf, *Liebeszenen*, 341–44. This stylistic device is also to be observed in ancient Egyptian love poetry, cf. Alfred Hermann, *Altägyptische Liebesdichtung* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1959), 111–24.

<sup>33</sup> The function of the Hellenistic choir is described best by Aristotle, *Poet.* 1456a.

<sup>34</sup> Even though hesitant to embrace the term plot, Assis, *Flashes*, 16, recognizes some kind of “development in the sphere of the emotions shared by two lovers” and that there “could be a didactic, conceptual or psychological development”, which meets the present definition of an overarching structure, i. e. a plot.

The already cited passage of 1:7 could be named, but others as well, a very prominent one being 3:1–5, here given in an abridged version:

*She.*       <sup>1</sup> On my bed in the nights I sought, whom my soul loves, and I did not find him [...] <sup>4</sup> Scarcely had I passed [the watchmen] that I found, whom my soul loves, I took hold of him and would not let him go, until I had brought him to the house of my mother [...] <sup>5</sup> I adjure you, Daughters of Jerusalem, by the gazelles and the hinds of the open field, do not awake, do not stir love until it wishes.

The anxious seeking and desiring, the clinging to the beloved, the begging—all these words give witness of how lost the woman is; lost in love, of course, but still lost. In contrast, the end of the book shows a woman that has grown, whose confidence has grown. Now, she can defy the teasing of the Daughters in 8:10 and proudly say:

*She.*       <sup>10</sup> I am a wall and my breast are like towers. So, in his eyes I have become like one who finds wholeness (שלום).

Even more so, she can let her beloved go now, certain about his love for her and certain that they will find each other again. And so the book ends with the verse:

*She.*       <sup>14</sup> Take flight, my beloved, and be akin to a gazelle or a young stag upon the mountains of spices.

An inverted development could be shown for the portrayal of the man, who starts out quite confident, but is increasingly jealous and insecure with regard to his beloved. The Daughters of Jerusalem serve as the “antagonists” who put the love to the test e. g. by teasing the woman and at times even questioning the faithfulness of the man.

In any case, these changes in the depiction of the characters and in their relations can be seen as a basic kind of progress, something which I would like to call a character-centered plot (as in opposition to a story-based plot). So, the Song of Songs must be seen as a cluster of several encounters, some more connected, some less. But on the whole, a loose character-plot of love-scenes emerges.

Still, there is a striking phenomenon to be observed in the character portrayal: On the one hand we have the sometimes very detailed description songs and the basic portrayal as lost in love. Yet on the other, the Woman and the Man remain astonishingly generic in character. Both lovers (and the Daughters, as well) cannot be seen as elaborate characters. Rather, they represent something more of types, they are the archetypical lovers—and in that quite generic. I would see this phenomenon as a gap, a “Leerstelle”, as Wolfgang Iser has called it: Since the lovers are depicted in such a universal way, it is easier for the recipients to identify with them.<sup>35</sup> One might

---

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Wolfgang Iser, *Der Akt des Lesens: Theorie ästhetischer Wirkung*, 2nd ed., UTB 636 (Munich: W. Fink, 1984), 284 (based on the work by Roman Ingarden, *Das literarische Kunstwerk*, 4th ed. (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag,

think that this contradicts the presented line of thought concerning the plot. Yet, the plot is still there, even if it is a rather special one. And in fact, I would argue that this feature makes the Song more “performable”, e. g. in the context of seasonal or biographic festivities.

## 4 The Song of Songs—a dramatic text of the Hellenistic Era

In sum, the Song of Songs fulfills all three criteria. It clearly meets the Lexis-criterion and is, thus, a dramatic text. But as there are elements of Opsis and Plot, as well, we can conclude that the Song even features a considerable performance potential. That the Song was actually presented to an audience is hinted at in several sources, even though these occasions might not have been dramatic in the narrower Hellenistic or Shakespearean sense, i. e. on a specific stage. Still, these instances show that the Song was indeed performed publicly in the context of certain festivities.<sup>36</sup>

Maybe the most prominent hints to some kind of performance tradition for the Song are Rabbinic remarks. One of them turns ~~apologetically~~ against ~~the-those who~~ presentation of the Song in ~~the~~ משתאות ביתי (“house of banquets” t. Sanh 12:10; b. Sanh 101a) as a “kind of (secular) song” מין זמר and reckons them among those who “have no share in the world to come” (t. Sanh 12:10; cf. b. Sanh 101a). The Tosephta even mentions a certain singing technique (המנוענע קולו, literally “to shake the voice”), probably applied in a performance by professional singers,<sup>37</sup> which likely points to a presentation in assigned roles or at least in “assigned voices”. Another passage might hint at the possible recital of the Song in spring festivities (m. Ta’an 4:8).<sup>38</sup> On the 15<sup>th</sup> of Av and Yom Kippur, the daughters of Jerusalem went out to dance in the vineyards wearing white garments.<sup>39</sup> The text, then, explicitly quotes what the daughters used to say on this occasion,<sup>40</sup> and gives afterwards two Biblical passages: Prov 31:30–31, and Song 3:11. Importantly though, the quote from Proverbs seems to be a later addition to the printed version, as it is not included in major medieval manuscripts.<sup>41</sup> Accordingly, the original text proceeds from

---

1972), Mit einem Anhang von den Funktionen der Sprache im Theaterschauspiel, 257–61). For the Psalms this concept was taken up e. g. by Dorothea Erbele-Küster, *Lesen als Akt des Betens: Eine Rezeptionsästhetik der Psalmen*, WMANT 87 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 2001), 184–87.

<sup>36</sup> The text lends itself to be performed on a manifold variety of occasions, which is one reason why we unfortunately cannot identify these specific circumstances any more in detail. Cf. also Hopf, *Liebeszenen*, 328–29.

<sup>37</sup> Thus Segal, Moše H. “The Song of Songs.” *VT* 12 (1962): 470–90, see esp. 485.

<sup>38</sup> This notion has already been put forward by Segal, “Song,” 488, who sees this passage as a clear hint to the usage of the Song of Songs in the context of various festivities.

<sup>39</sup> According to b. Ta’an 31a, this event even served as some kind of “marriage market”.

<sup>40</sup> The text given in the Mishnah reads: “Lift your eyes, young man (בחור), and observe well what you are about to choose for yourself. Do not set your eyes on beauty (alone, rather) set your eyes on the family.”

<sup>41</sup> Namely, the Mishnah codices Kaufmann, Parma and Cambridge 470, as well as the Munich manuscript of the Babylonian Talmud; cf. the text-critical annotations in Krupp, Michael. *Taanit: Fasten*. Die Mischna II,9 (Jerusa-

the words of the daughters directly to Song 3:11. This creates at least a close bond between the two quotes, if not a direct link,<sup>42</sup> which might refer to a performance tradition of the Song.<sup>43</sup>

But there are further clues that lead in this direction: In some important Greek codices, among them the Sinaiticus, there are rubrics indicating the speaker and sometimes even giving something close to stage directions.<sup>44</sup> Accordingly, the scribes obviously had some kind of dramatic concept in mind when they thought of the Song. Similarly, the Qumran scrolls of this book seem to be written in a lay-out that serves performance-functions. At least their size and their lay-out (*spatia* in 4QCant<sup>a</sup> and 4QCant<sup>b</sup>, as well as, scribal markings in the margins of 4QCant<sup>b</sup>) suggest something of the kind, as is shown elsewhere.<sup>45</sup> And last, but not least, Origen explicitly designates the Song of Songs as “dramatis in modum”,<sup>46</sup> offering a complete interpretation of the book as some sort of *epithalamium* about the mystical wedding of Christ and his church, respectively of the Word of God and the human soul.

The internal textual evidence of the Song as well as the hints from reception history prompt me to say that with respect to its genre, the book is comparable to Hellenistic drama—at least in principle. This does not mean, the Song *is* a Hellenistic drama, of course. There are simply too many differences in style and composition. Still, as a performance text the Song would have been used in a rather similar way as Hellenistic drama and, therefore, it addresses similar social needs and functions. This similarity is even more striking as a growing number of scholars date the canonical Song of Songs to the Hellenistic era. This assessment is usually based mostly on arguments with respect to the language of the book, but in part also on various aspects concerning the realia mentioned in the text.<sup>47</sup>

---

lem: Lee Achim Sefarim, 2003), 27; similarly, Correns, Dietrich. *Taanijot: Fastentage*. Mischna II,9 (Berlin, New York: de Gruyter, 1989), 128 and 137.

<sup>42</sup> The introductory phrase **וְכֵן הוּא אֹמֵר** before Song 3:11 might initiate hermeneutical reflections (cf. e. g. Correns, *Taanijot*, 128), but could—especially in the present context with a similar introduction to the quote of the daughters a little earlier—refer to the **בְּחֹר** mentioned in the daughters’ lines, thus pointing out the reply.

<sup>43</sup> Segal, “Song,” 485–88, even goes so far as to state on the basis of m. Ta’an 4:8 that presumably “the Song with its pictures of the joys of love occupied a prominent part in the songs at the dances” (488).

<sup>44</sup> A text-critical description is given in Jay C. Treat, *Lost Keys: Text and Interpretation in Old Greek Song of Songs and Its Earliest Manuscript Witnesses* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Microform, 1996), 399–412. [See also the online-version of the Codex Sinaiticus: http://www.codex-sinaiticus.net/en/manuscript.aspx?book=29&lid=en&side=r&zoomSlider=0](http://www.codex-sinaiticus.net/en/manuscript.aspx?book=29&lid=en&side=r&zoomSlider=0). For details on the interpretation of these rubrics see also the summary in Hopf, *Liebeszenen*, 305–08,

<sup>45</sup> See the early draft of Matthias Hopf, “4QCant<sup>b</sup>—Ein dramatischer Text,” in *Proceedings of the Eighth meeting of the IOQS in 2013 in Munich (Working Title)*, ed. Eibert Tigchelaar et al., StTDJ (Leiden, New York: Brill, forthcoming). For a short summary cf. also Hopf, *Liebeszenen*, 308–10.

<sup>46</sup> Orig., Comm. Cant. 1:1 (GCS Orig. 8,61 respectively SC 375,80). See also Hopf, *Liebeszenen*, 355–57, [as well as: Alfons Fürst and Holger Strutwolf, Origenes: Der Kommentar zum Hobelied \(Origenes: Werke mit deutscher Übersetzung 9/1; Freiburg i. Br. et al.: Herder, 2016\), 11–12.](http://www.alfons-fuerst.de/origenes/origenes-der-kommentar-zum-hobelied-origenes-werke-mit-deutscher-uebersetzung-9-1-freiburg-i-br-et-al-herder-2016-11-12)

<sup>47</sup> For a dating in the Hellenistic era see e. g. Leo (= Günter) Krinetzki, OSB, *Das Hobe Lied: Kommentar zu Gestalt und Kerygma eines alttestamentlichen Liebesliedes*, Kommentare und Beiträge zum Alten und Neuen Testament (Düs-

As a consequence, we might need to reevaluate the reasons for the canonization of the Song of Songs. Most of the time, the supposed old age of the book and its attribution to Solomon are put forward for this.<sup>48</sup> Yet, Bernhard Lang has shown that the motives for the inclusion of texts into the canonical part of the כתובים differ from those for the Torah or for the Prophets. Instead of an explicitly theological concept of revelation, the Writings rather seem to aim at establishing something like a literature canon, and along with it a Jewish cultural identity.<sup>49</sup> This corresponds with the formation of the Writings in the so-called “Hellenizing Crisis” with its struggle of assimilation and distinction.<sup>50</sup> If Jewish cultural identity really longed for its own literary classics, it seems only logical that every known literary genre should be represented in this Jewish canon. Actually, Bernhard Lang has shown that the Writings indeed take up the typical Hellenistic genres: The Psalms are there as representatives of poetry, there is sapiential literature in the Proverbs, there is historiography in the books of Chronicles, and there is prose, as well, in the books of Esther or Ruth.<sup>51</sup> Nevertheless, one major genre is missing in Bernhard Lang’s list: tragedy and comedy, i. e. performance literature. This seems even stranger as those genres were quite widespread and popular in the Hellenistic Era.

Accordingly, I would like to suggest that the Song of Songs was included in the Writings exactly because of its high esteem as a Jewish performance text: Before its canonization, the Song was quite probably commonly performed on various occasions and it was, thus, very popular among the people.<sup>52</sup> So, when the sages tried to establish a canon of Jewish national literature,

---

seldorf: Patmos, 1964), 45; Fox, *Song*, 190; Müller, Kaiser, and Loader, *Hobeliad*, 3, as well as 50–51 (even though he does not preclude a higher age of single songs); Zakovitch, *Hobeliad*, 66; David M. Carr, *The Formation of the Hebrew Bible: A New Reconstruction* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 455; recently also Barbiero, *Song*, 506. Somewhat more cautiously is Frederick W. Dobbs-Allsopp, “Late Linguistic Features in the Song of Songs,” in *Perspectives on the Song of Songs: Perspektiven der Hobeliadauslegung*, ed. Anselm C. Hagedorn, BZAW 346 (Berlin, New York: de Gruyter, 2005), 27–77, see esp. 71–73, who does not rule out dating the Song to Hellenistic times, but prefers the Persian period; similarly Othmar Keel, “Hoheslied,” in *Neues Bibel-Lexikon Vol. 2*, ed. Manfred Görg and Bernhard Lang (Zürich, Düsseldorf: Benziger, 1995), 183–91, see here 189..

<sup>48</sup> Cf. among others Gerleman, *Ruth*, 51; Murphy, *Song*, 5; Müller, Kaiser, and Loader, *Hobeliad*, 11; Zakovitch, *Hobeliad*, 92; Exum, *Song*, 71; Richard S. Hess, *Song of Songs*, BCOTWP (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 20; Barbiero, *Song*, 3.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. Bernhard Lang, “The ‘Writings’: A Hellenistic Literary Canon in the Hebrew Bible,” in *Canonization and Decanonization: Papers Presented to the International Conference of the Leiden Institute for the Study of Religions (LISOR), held at Leiden 9–10 January 1997*, ed. Arie van der Kooij, Karel van der Toorn and Joannes A. M. Snoek, SHR 82 (Leiden, Boston, Köln: Brill, 1998), 41.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. e.g. *ibid.*, 50–52; Arie van der Kooij, “The Canonization of Ancient Books Kept in the Temple of Jerusalem,” in Kooij, Toorn and Snoek, *Canonization*, 17–40, see esp. 36; Georg Steins, “Zwei Konzepte—ein Kanon: Neue Theorien zur Entstehung und Eigenart der Hebräischen Bibel,” in *Kanonisierung—die hebräische Bibel im Werden*, ed. Georg Steins and Johannes Taschner, Biblisch-Theologische Studien 110 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 2010), 8–45, see esp. 15 and 35–37; Carr, *Formation*, 159 and 179–180; David M. Carr, *Einführung in das Alte Testament: Biblische Texte—imperiale Kontexte* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2013), 296–300.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. Lang, “Writings,” 51.

<sup>52</sup> That the Song was held in high esteem is also underscored by Keel, *Hobeliad*, 14–20; Zakovitch, *Hobeliad*, 97–101; Murphy, *Song*, 93–94; Longman, *Song*, 58; John Barton, “The Canonicity of the Song of Songs,” in *Perspectives on*

they drew on this piece of popular performance literature—well aware that it is not a Hellenistic drama, but the closest Jewish parallel to it. It might even be that the differences were one of the reasons for their choice, as only in this dissimilarity the Song of Songs can truly serve as an independent Jewish “counterweight” to Hellenistic drama.

---

*the Song of Songs: Perspektiven der Hoheliedauslegung*, ed. Anselm C. Hagedorn, BZAW 346 (Berlin, New York: de Gruyter, 2005), 1–7, see esp. 2; Exum, *Song*, 73–77; and others. One argument for the Song’s popularity would also be that four manuscripts of the book have been identified among the Qumran scrolls, cf. Emanuel Tov, “106.–108. Introduction to 4QCant<sup>a-c</sup>,” in *Qumran Cave 4, XI: Psalms to Chronicles*, ed. Eugene Ulrich et al., DJD 16 (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 195–98, see esp. 195, while the book of Proverbs is attested only twice and even Jeremiah not more than six times (cf. Emanuel Tov, “Categorized List of the ‘Biblical Texts’,” in *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert: Indices and an Introduction to the Discoveries in the Judaean Desert Series*, ed. Emanuel Tov, DJD 39 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), 165–83, see esp. 172–74).

## Bibliography

- Antor, Heinz. “Plot.” Pages 575–76 in *Metzler Lexikon Literatur- und Kulturtheorie: Ansätze—Personen—Grundbegriffe*. 4th ed. Edited by Ansgar Nünning. Stuttgart, Weimar: J. B. Metzler, 2008.
- Asmuth, Bernhard. *Einführung in die Dramenanalyse*. 5th ed. Sammlung Metzler 188. Stuttgart: J. B. Metzler, 1997.
- Assis, Eliyahu. *Flashes of Fire: A Literary Analysis of the Song of Songs*. LHBOTS 503. New York: T & T Clark, 2009.
- Barbiero, Gianni. *Song of Songs: A Close Reading*. VTSup 144. Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2011.
- Barton, John. “The Canonicity of the Song of Songs.” Pages 1–7 in *Perspectives on the Song of Songs: Perspektiven der Hoheliedauslegung*. Edited by Anselm C. Hagedorn. BZAW 346. Berlin, New York: de Gruyter, 2005.
- Bühlmann, Walter. *Das Hohelied*. NSKAT 15. Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1997.
- Cancik, Hubert, and Helmuth Schneider, eds., *Der neue Pauly: Enzyklopädie der Antike*. 12 vols. Stuttgart, Weimar: J. B. Metzler, 1996ff.
- Carr, David M. *Einführung in das Alte Testament: Biblische Texte—imperiale Kontexte*. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2013.
- Carr, David M. *The Formation of the Hebrew Bible: A New Reconstruction*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Correns, Dietrich. *Taanijot: Fastentage*. Mischna II,9. Berlin, New York: de Gruyter, 1989.
- Delitzsch, Franz. *Das Hohelied*. Leipzig: Dörffling und Franke, 1851. Repr., Charleston: Nabu Press, 2010.
- Dobbs-Allsopp, Frederick W. “Late Linguistic Features in the Song of Songs.” Pages 27–77 in *Perspectives on the Song of Songs: Perspektiven der Hoheliedauslegung*. Edited by Anselm C. Hagedorn. BZAW 346. Berlin, New York: de Gruyter, 2005.
- Erbele-Küster, Dorothea. *Lesen als Akt des Betens: Eine Rezeptionsästhetik der Psalmen*. WMANT 87. Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 2001.
- Ewald, Georg H. A. *Das Hohelied Salomos*. Göttingen: Deuerlich, 1826. Repr., Whitefish: Kessinger Publishing, 2011.
- Exum, J. C. *Song of Songs: A Commentary*. *The Old Testament Library*. Edited by James L. Mays, Carol A. Newsom and David L. Petersen. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005.
- Fischer, Stefan. *Das Hohelied Salomos zwischen Poesie und Erzählung: Erzähltextanalyse eines poetischen Textes*. FAT 72. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010.
- Fischer-Lichte, Erika. *Performativität: Eine Einführung*. 2nd ed. Edition Kulturwissenschaft 10. Bielefeld: transcript, 2012.
- Fox, Michael V. *The Song of Songs and the Ancient Egyptian Love Songs*. Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985.
- Fürst, Alfons, and Holger Strutwolf, Origenes: Der Kommentar zum Hohelied (Origenes: Werke mit deutscher Übersetzung 9/1; Freiburg i. Br. et al.: Herder, 2016).
- Gerlemann, Gillis. *Ruth. Das Hohelied*. Vol. 18 of BKAT. Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1965.
- Ginsburg, Christian D. *The Song of Songs: Translated from the Original Hebrew, with a Commentary, Historical and Critical*. London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans, and Roberts, 1857. Repr., Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2009.
- Hermann, Alfred. *Altägyptische Liebesdichtung*. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1959.
- Hess, Richard S. *Song of Songs*. BCOTWP. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005.
- Hopf, Matthias. “4QCant<sup>b</sup>—Ein dramatischer Text.” in *Proceedings of the Eighth meeting of the IOQS in 2013 in Munich (Working Title)*. Edited by Eibert Tigchelaar et al. StIDJ. Leiden, New York: Brill, forthcoming.
- Hopf, Matthias. *Liebeszenen: Eine literaturwissenschaftliche Studie zum Hohelied als einem dramatisch-performativen Text*. Vol. 108 of ATANT. Zurich: TVZ Theologischer Verlag, 2016.

- Imgarden, Roman. *Das literarische Kunstwerk*. 4th ed. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1972.
- Iser, Wolfgang. *Der Akt des Lesens: Theorie ästhetischer Wirkung*. 2nd ed. UTB 636. Munich: W. Fink, 1984.
- Keel, Othmar. *Das Hohelied*. 2nd ed. ZBK.AT 18. Zurich: TVZ Theologischer Verlag, 1992.
- Keel, Othmar, “Hoheslied.” Pages 183–91 in *Neues Bibel-Lexikon*, Vol. 2. Edited by Manfred Görg and Bernhard Lang. Zurich, Düsseldorf: Benziger, 1995.
- Kooij, Arie van der. “The Canonization of Ancient Books Kept in the Temple of Jerusalem.” Pages 17–40 in *Canonization and Decanonization: Papers Presented to the International Conference of the Leiden Institute for the Study of Religions (LISOR), held at Leiden 9–10 January 1997*. Edited by Arie van der Kooij, Karel van der Toorn and Joannes A. M. Snoek. SHR 82. Leiden, Boston, Cologne: Brill, 1998.
- Krämer, Sibylle, and Marco Stahlhut. “Das ‘Performative’ als Thema der Sprach- und Kulturphilosophie.” *Paragrana* 10,1.1 (2001): 35–64.
- Krinetzki, Leo (= Günter), OSB. *Das Hobe Lied: Kommentar zu Gestalt und Kerygma eines alttestamentlichen Liebesliedes*. Kommentare und Beiträge zum Alten und Neuen Testament. Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1964.
- Krupp, Michael. *Taanit: Fasten*. Die Mischna II,9. Jerusalem: Lee Achim Sefarim, 2003.
- Lang, Bernhard. “The ‘Writings’: A Hellenistic Literary Canon in the Hebrew Bible.” Pages 41–65 in *Canonization and Decanonization: Papers Presented to the International Conference of the Leiden Institute for the Study of Religions (LISOR), held at Leiden 9–10 January 1997*. Edited by Arie van der Kooij, Karel van der Toorn and Joannes A. M. Snoek. SHR 82. Leiden, Boston, Cologne: Brill, 1998.
- Longman, Tremper, III. *Song of Songs*. NICOT. Grand Rapids, Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2001.
- Müller, Hans-Peter, Otto Kaiser, and James A. Loader. *Das Hohelied / Klagelieder / Das Buch Ester*. 4th ed. Vol. 16/2 of ATD. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992.
- Müller, Hans-Peter. “Travestien und geistige Landschaften: Zum Hintergrund einiger Motive bei Kohelet und im Hohelied.” *ZAW* 109 (1997): 557–74.
- Murphy, Roland E. *The Song of Songs: A Commentary on the Book of Canticles or The Song of Songs*. Hermeneia. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990.
- Nitsche, Stefan A. *Jesaja 24–27: ein dramatischer Text: Die Frage nach den Genres prophetischer Literatur des Alten Testaments und die Textgraphik der großen Jesajarolle aus Qumran*. Vol. 166 of BWANT. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2006.
- Pfister, Manfred. “Performance/Performativität.” Pages 562–64 in *Metzler Lexikon Literatur- und Kulturtheorie: Ansätze—Personen—Grundbegriffe*. 4th ed. Edited by Ansgar Nünning. Stuttgart, Weimar: J. B. Metzler, 2008.
- Pfister, Manfred. *Das Drama: Theorie und Analyse*. 11th ed. UTB 580. Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 2001.
- Pope, Marvin H. *Song of Songs: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. AncB 7,C. Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, 1977.
- Rhoads, David. “Performance Criticism: An Emerging Methodology in Second Testament Studies—Part I.” *BTB* 36 (2006): 118–33.
- Roth, Cecil, and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *Encyclopaedia Judaica*. 16 vols. Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House, 1971.
- Rudolph, Wilhelm. *Das Buch Ruth—Das Hobe Lied—Die Klagelieder*. Vol. 17,1/3 of KAT. Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1970.
- Schechner, Richard. *Performance Studies: An Introduction*. 2nd ed. New York, London: Routledge, 2006.
- Schechner, Richard. *Performance Theory*. 2nd ed. Routledge classics. London, New York: Routledge, 2003.
- Segal, Moše H. “The Song of Songs.” *VT* 12 (1962): 470–90.
- Steins, Georg. “Zwei Konzepte—ein Kanon: Neue Theorien zur Entstehung und Eigenart der Hebräischen Bibel.” Pages 8–45 in *Kanonisierung—die hebräische Bibel im Werden*. Edited by



- Georg Steins and Johannes Taschner. Vol. 110 of *Biblisch-theologische Studien*. Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 2010.
- Tov, Emanuel. “106.–108. Introduction to 4QCant<sup>a-c</sup>.” Pages 195–98 in *Qumran Cave 4, XI: Psalms to Chronicles*. Edited by Eugene Ulrich et al. DJD 16. Leiden: Brill, 2000.
- Tov, Emanuel. “Categorized List of the ‘Biblical Texts’.” Pages 165–83 in *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert: Indices and an Introduction to the Discoveries in the Judaean Desert Series*. Edited by Emanuel Tov. DJD 39. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002.
- Treat, Jay C. *Lost Keys: Text and Interpretation in Old Greek Song of Songs and Its Earliest Manuscript Witnesses*. Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Microform, 1996.
- Utzschneider, Helmut. “Ist das Drama eine universale Gattung?: Erwägungen zu ‘dramatischen’ Texten in der alttestamentlichen Prophetie, der attischen Tragödie und im ägyptischen Kultspiel.” Pages 269–98 in *Gottes Vorstellung: Untersuchungen zur literarischen Ästhetik und Theologie des Alten Testaments*. Edited by Helmut Utzschneider. Vol. 175 of BWANT. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2007.
- Utzschneider, Helmut. *Michas Reise in die Zeit: Studien zum Drama als Genre der prophetischen Literatur des Alten Testaments*. Vol. 180 of SBS. Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1999.
- Zakovitch, Yair. *Das Hohelied*. HThKAT. Freiburg im Breisgau, Basel, Vienna: Herder, 2004.